

**Direct Testimony of Frederick D. Abraham**

Q. What are your name and position?

A. My name is **Frederick D. Abraham**, one of the Gregg Hill Residents  
submitting surrebuttal testimony at the request of William D. Orr

Q. Have you ever testified before the Public Service Board?

A. Yes.

Q. What are your qualifications?

A. My resume is on file. For the present testimony, I would like to emphasize  
the relevance of my participation in the successful petitions for quiet zones  
for paddling on Waterbury Reservoir. The Water Resources Board  
commended the cooperation between various users in accomplishing this  
compromise use of the Reservoir (The same spirit of cooperation between  
various parties during the development of our proposal concerning this  
power line routing is gratefully acknowledged, including Velco, the DPS,  
and our state representatives, and the ANR). I am an avid outdoorsman  
and over a period of decades have paddled and cross-country skied on the  
Reservoir. My brass bands and jazz bands have performed concerts on  
pontoon boats supplied by the Vermont Department of Forest, Parks and  
Recreation at the family-centered recreational Day Use Area of the  
Reservoir, with paddlers surrounding us.

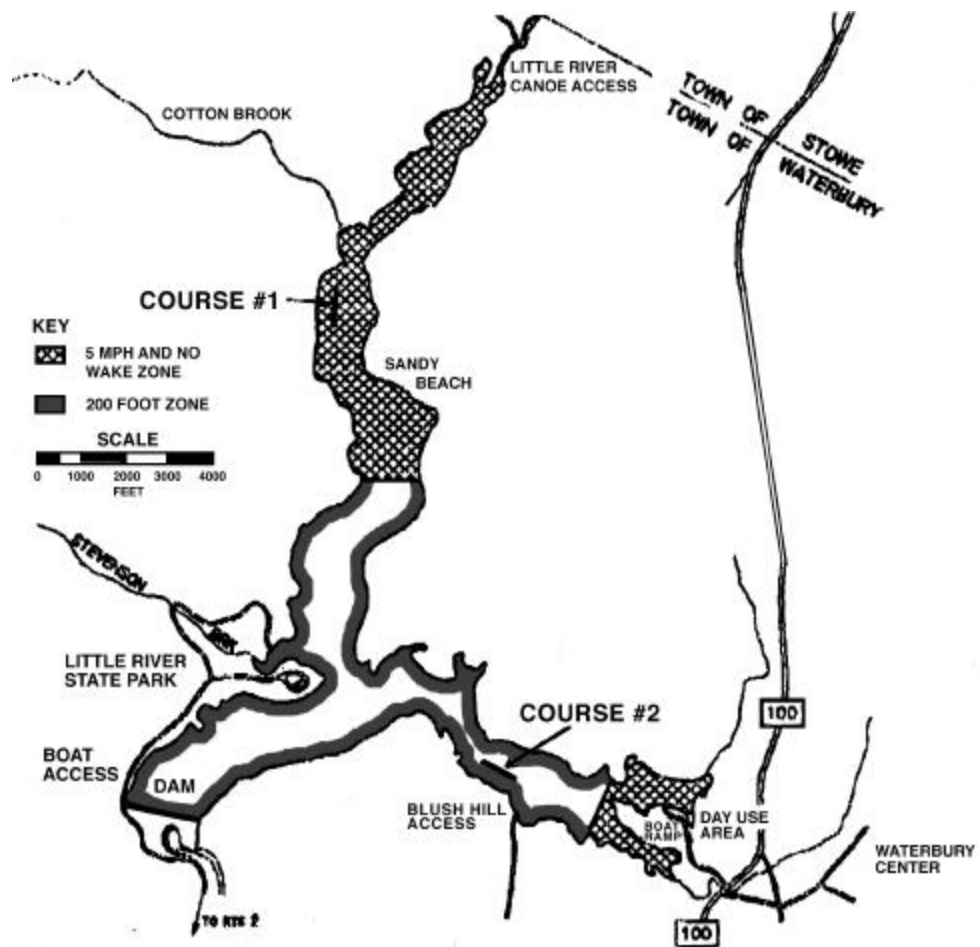
Q. What is the purpose of your testimony?

A. To respond to rebuttal and subsequent discovery testimonies regarding the  
aesthetic effects of the GHR reroute on visitors to the Waterbury

Reservoir. I will restrict my testimony to the likely aesthetic effects of our proposed reroute.

Q. Do you have a map that would help assess the aesthetics and uses of the Reservoir?

A. Yes. The **map** shows the three arms of the Reservoir, each of which has unique uses and aesthetics.



The **Map** represents the rules adopted by the Water Resources Board in 1997, showing the 5 mph, no-wake zones. These zones include in addition to the upper two thirds of the northern arm, the far eastern bays of the eastern arm, and the 200 foot zone along the shore (dark, thick line) The

1 northern zone was especially set aside for its wilderness character and  
2 constitutes the most beautiful parts of the Reservoir and the richest in  
3 terms of biological diversity, especially north of Cotton Brook.

- 4       ▪ The northern arm. The upper two-thirds of this arm provides the most  
5 wilderness-like experience: no human structures and rich biodiversity.  
6 The State's Little River Canoe Access at the north end, and the 5 MPH  
7 and no wake zone emphasizes its importance as a wilderness area and  
8 for quiet enjoyment. Fishing, paddling, and the presence of wildlife,  
9 such as beaver, moose, deer, heron, mergansers, osprey, and loon  
10 (rare) are most abundant here. The path of the transmission line  
11 cannot, and could not, be seen from this arm.
- 12       ▪ The southern arm and extending up about a third of the way into the  
13 northern arm provides for more recreational activity and less  
14 wilderness-like areas because of the visibility of the dam, the  
15 campground, and the openness for more intense and less quiet use of  
16 the surface of the lake. Most of the higher speed boating activity is  
17 done in these large areas. The path of the transmission line through the  
18 Forest cannot, and could not, be seen from this arm.
- 19       ▪ The eastern arm, with more family activities due to the day use area  
20 (picnicking, swimming, boat launching), the Blush Hill Access  
21 (boating launching, fishing, picnicking), and the 'Sunbathers' Rock'  
22 (swimming and hanging-out). There are other bays and coves with  
23 wilderness qualities spread about the shores.. The new proposed routes  
24 for the transmission lines through the Forest, including our  
25 alternatives, should not be more discernable than for the present lines  
26 for the eastern half of this arm, and not visible at all from the western  
27 half of this arm or from closer to shore than midway on the lake, their  
28 being obscured by the trees at the lake's edge.

1 The current transmission lines (except where they are over the lake or  
2 viewed from vantage points under or close to the transmission lines) are  
3 visible for only a short ways into the forest from vantage points along the  
4 shore or on the surface of the lake. Our proposed alternatives should not  
5 create any significant increase in their discernability.



6  
7 Q. Do you have any evidence to suggest that transmission lines in the forest  
8 are not highly visible from the lake?

9 A. Many such views evidence this, but there is one especially relevant to this  
10 area of the Reservoir.

11 The photograph above is a photograph of the Blush Hill side of the  
12 Reservoir taken from “Sunbathers’ Rock”, an outcropping just west of

1 the power line on the north shore of the eastern arm, a popular picnicking  
2 and swimming spot. The existing 34.5 kV power line runs horizontally  
3 across this hill, but the interruption posed by the cut for the right-of-way is  
4 almost imperceptible even if one is looking for it. While the distance,  
5 angle, and height of the towers in this photograph are close but not  
6 identical to what the view would be looking the opposite way toward  
7 Gregg Hill, we think it very likely that the effect will be similarly  
8 imperceptible and inoffensive.

9 Q. Does that conclude your testimony?

10 A. Yes. But I have more pictures, maps, and satellite renditions that I am  
11 dying to show you if you want to see them. And many photos of wildlife  
12 and recreational activity on the Reservoir.

13 Q. What are your favorite times for paddling out there?

14 A. Easy. Dawn and dusk. The color is magnificent, and at 4:30 am there are  
15 the serenity and beauty of this magnificent wilderness are incomparable  
16 and indescribable. An occasional night-time paddle is also a great  
17 experience.